

Spotlight

on

DHHS



Volume 1, Issue 2

Employee Newsletter

September-October 2004

NH Immunization Program Helps Ward Off Flu

As sure as autumn leaves will fall, the flu season will soon be upon us. The New Hampshire Immunization Program provides useful information to help DHHS employees and NH residents weather the annual event.

Just as the vaccination season was about to begin though, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced that one of the two major suppliers of vaccine for the nation, Chiron, will not be delivering any vaccine this year. That means the country has to make due with about half the 100 million doses it ordered. The good news is that our pediatric doses come from



the other manufacturer, Aventis Pasteur. According to NH Immunization Program Manager, Michael Dumond, "We had hoped to hold employee clinics this year, but unfortunately they have had to be cancelled."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revised their recommendations on the priority groups for *this* year DHHS

Flu
Continued on page 8



From the desk of...

Commissioner Stephen



Year One as Your Commissioner

I recently celebrated my first anniversary as Commissioner. What a year it has been. The challenges we have faced and the progress we have made as a Department have been tremendous. That is why I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all DHHS for your remarkable work over this past year. This could not have happened without you.

The biggest test for DHHS has been our FY '04/'05 budget, though that is not a new phenomenon. However, we have made it through significant deficits and reductions thus far and done so without adversely affecting direct services. This is remarkable and a testament to the dedication and commitment of everyone within the Department.

DHHS' vacancy rate has been high, yet we have managed it so that there has not been a need to consider personnel reductions, although we have made reductions in unclassified personnel. I understand that the high vacancy rate might cause stress to our staff, and I applaud your willingness to go the extra mile to continue doing the great things we do for the citizens of the State.

Our reorganization has also asked a great deal of our staff. The goal of this process is to build a DHHS structure that would be sustainable for years to come. I commend those who have adapted to new roles and responsibilities in our shared service model. This is critical to having an integrated Department.

This year has meant a great deal to me personally as well. From the many visits to the district offices across the State to meeting

the service providers to the many non-profit and charitable groups and organizations who do such a great job, I have learned so much about this State and those who use our services. I consider myself much better for the experience and want to thank all those in DHHS who have helped me along the way.

For example, I recently met with federal DHHS Secretary Tommy Thompson in Washington to explain Medicaid modernization to him and his staff. You would not believe how impressed he was by our Department's efforts to change how we provide services, and the positive effects it would have for our citizens, if approved, for years to come.

Some of the most profound and moving moments have come from directly meeting the citizens we serve. I have had a wonderful time meeting seniors in the many facilities in the State as well as going into the homes of families with disabled children with Dr. Kassler and seeing the love these kids receive. I have been truly blessed to have these experiences.

We have had a tumultuous year in public health as well. Meningitis and hepatitis scares have led to mass vaccinations, and our staff has performed admirably. As I write this, the State may be facing an encephalitis outbreak as well. As Commissioner, this gives a sense of perspective to just how far-reaching the responsibilities of our department are. Ultimately, the whole state depends on us.

So, while I reflect on my first year at DHHS, there is no time to waste to begin

Commissioner
Continued on page 8

A Closed Door and Windows of Opportunity Opened

Early in December 2003, the first news about the closing of the Jac-Pac Plant (a subsidiary of Tyson Foods) hit the press. Over 600 workers in the Manchester community were about to lose their jobs, with only 60 days before the layoff. The impact of such a loss was going to be greater in the minority community since the largest portion of the workers were members of diverse cultural background.

We had new challenges ahead of us. Never before had agencies dealt with so many various cultures all at once and in the numbers we were about to meet. A "Rapid Response" was put together—a small, but empowered group, consisting of John Duclos (Department of Resources and Economic Development), Germano Martins (Department of Health and Human Services), Ron Giroux (Southern New Hampshire Services), and Leanne Topolosky (Department of Environmental Services).

Presentations in different languages, including Spanish, Bosnian, Arabic, Cambodian, and English, were given to all employees on all three shifts. These nine presentations covered information about the layoff, when it was going to take effect, severance pay, how to apply for unemployment, and about our Department's programs and benefits. Workers were informed that the a Worker Assistance Center would be set up at the plant until February 27th and then moved to another location. In addition, two employee fairs would take place; the first, a Job Fair, on January 23rd, and the second, a Resource Fair, on February 13th.

The Resource Fair received great support from Gail Garceau from the Manchester United Way and the Job Fair was well supported by David Scannell from Manchester Mayor Robert Baines' Office. We also had very important and necessary support from Anne Sanderson of the International Institute, and assistance and interpretation services from Jazmin Miranda of the Minority Health Coalition.

The Worker Assistance Center is now in operation in its own space at 149 Hanover Street in Manchester, primarily due to a grant this project received. Senator Judd Gregg was a huge force in obtaining this grant.

The Center receives a lot of support, not only from State agencies, but also from our elected officials. Governor Craig Benson is a big supporter of the Center and has visited there on various occasions. Senator Lou D'Allesandro, U.S. Congressman Jeb Bradley, and Mayor Baines have all given this project their full and immediate attention.

This project is a good example of excellent teamwork. The results of our efforts are measurable and in sync with the core values and purpose of our Department—keeping New Hampshire healthy and helping those in need realize their full potential.

Of the 468 workers who were laid off, 279 are now employed. An additional 80 workers are currently attending English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes at the Center. These classes are provided by the



Representing the Department at the Resource Fair were (left to right) Anela Krusica, Michelle McCarthy, and Germano Martins

Manchester Community Technical College with grant funds.

When the Plant's doors closed, a window of opportunity opened, and, because people cared, things are getting better all the time for the former employees of Jac-Pac.

*Germano Martins
Community Relations Manager*



Employee Assistance Program: *They're There For You!*

When juggling work, family, and personal responsibilities seems challenging or overwhelming, your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help. All types of sensible, healthy people who are concerned about their jobs, their children, and themselves, and who want to learn better problem-solving skills, go to EAP. Your EAP offers a wide variety of services that can help you manage your life in a more satisfying and healthy manner. All services are confidential and voluntary. A simple phone call can put you on the road to getting help with a variety of issues: emotional, financial, family, health management, legal, job stress, and substance abuse.

**EAP is only a phone call away.
1-800-852-3345 ext. 4336 or 271-4336**

Spotlight on DHHS

Editors

*Kathleen Desmarais, PIO
Nicola Whitley, PIO*

Liaisons

*Joe Arcidiacono, DCYF
Kevin Connor, BFMA
Jennifer Daniels, BII
Marilyn Doe, BHRM
Andrea Goldsberg, DJJS
Daisy Kahlan, BBH
Margaret Morrill, BEAS
Beth D'Ovidio, DPHS
Lloyd Peterson, OCOM
Wendy Roper, DEA
Michelle Rosado, BDD
Simone Roy, DCYF
Pat Thompson, EAP*



In September, Food Protection Unit employees hosted the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Van at the Hopkinton State Fair. Left to right: Christine Adamski, Disease Control Section, works the wheel; Catherine Violet of UNH Cooperative Extension with Thermys; Al Lamson, Food Protection, and the Fight Bac! Germ.

Commisioner Stephen Presents the H.I.R.E. Award

Commissioner Stephen recently presented Gene and Catherine Boutin, owners of Oak Designs, Inc., a Manchester-based manufacturing firm, with the NH Employment Program's first H.I.R.E. Award.

The H.I.R.E. (Helping Individuals Reach Employment) Award recognizes employers who have played a key role in helping individuals transition from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to self-sufficiency by hiring them into full-time positions with benefits. Administered by DHHS's Division of Family Assistance, the New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP) is a statewide work support program for low-

income families with children who receive TANF.



Commissioner Stephen presents the H.I.R.E. Award to Catherine and Gene Boutin

"Oak Designs is a tremendous asset to our community," said Commissioner Stephen. "Everyone wants to move people from welfare to work, but a critical component is having jobs available for those coming off welfare. Companies like Oak Design encourage individual initiative, treat people with dignity and respect and allow an opportunity for those moving from TANF to reach their full potential."

Since relocating from Nashua into their new manufacturing facilities in Manchester in 2000, Oak Designs has provided employment opportunities to 30 participants in the New Hampshire Employment Program. Many of these new employees have been refugees.

Walk for Health

On a warm summer morning in August, Commissioner Stephen and Governor Craig Benson participated in a *Walk for Health* from the State House to White Park to promote physical activity as an important way to improve overall health.

"New Hampshire is the healthiest state in the nation, but we can do better," said Commissioner Stephen. "One of the best ways that citizens of our State can improve their health is through exercise and I want to encourage everyone, both children and adults, to get out and get active."

Also in attendance were Brian Cresta from the New England Regional Office of Administration for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Concord Boys &

Girls Club, the City of Concord Recreation Department, AARP New Hampshire, Concord Hospital, and the Concord Police.

"Studies have shown that moderate physical activity just three times a week can have a positive effect on many health problems, such as heart disease, high cholesterol, depression, osteoporosis, diabetes and even stress, said Dr. William Kassler, State Medical Director. "Only 54% of adults in New Hampshire get the recommended amount of physical activity and 20% are physically inactive. Exercise can have a great impact on overall health and studies show that if children are regu-

larly active when they are young, they tend to stay active as adults."



Governor Benson and Commissioner Stephen were joined in the Walk for Health by team members from the Manchester Wolves, including their mascot.

In the News



Kudos to Karen Blizzard-Royce, Cheryl Clairmont, and Terry Smith on receiving the Governor's Initiative Award for the cost-savings and efficiency measures they proposed.

Karen and Don Taylor (Office of Information Technology) were recognized for their outstanding work in developing DHHS' electronic federal mail system. Cheryl was honored for her cost effective recommendation to stop using bond paper for G&C letters. Terry was praised for his innovative efforts in developing and implementing remote training for District Office staff. Congratulations to



Cheryl and Karen



Terry

all! Keep up the great work.



As Linda Hodgdon left the Department to become Administrator of the NH Department of Justice, Commissioner Stephen presented her with a certificate of appreciation for the outstanding work and leadership she showed in the development of the Bureau of Improvement and Integrity. We wish Linda the very best in her new position. She is missed.



Congratulations to Patricia McGee who, on November 20th, will receive the 2004 New Hampshire Easter Seals Community Services Award for her outstanding service to the Manchester Community. Pat, who has

worked for the Department for more than 20 years, is the Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services (BEAS) Manchester District Office Supervisor. According to Jo Moncher, BEAS Director, Pat is an individual who "brings dedication, commitment and passion to our Bureau and to the people she serves."



The Manchester District Office is in operation at its new location at 195 McGregor Street, Suite 110 in the Mill West Corporate Center in Manchester. On September 13th, Commissioner Stephen was joined by state and local officials and community representatives at a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the opening of the Office.

Kudos to Kevin Connor, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Assets Management, his staff, and all the DHHS employees who put forth a wonderful effort on this project.



We welcome Rhonda Rollins, who joins the Commissioner's Office as receptionist. Rhonda, who has been with the Department for six years, previously worked in the Concord District Office with the Division of Family Assistance.

Let us know about staff who deserve recognition for a special accomplishment, award, or achievement. E-mail us at EmployeeNewsletter.

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

- John Quincy Adams

Opening day at the Manchester District Office location found a ribbon cutting ceremony and staff at work in their new surroundings.



DFA Receives High Performance Bonuses

The Department's Division of Family Assistance (DFA) has received federal high performance bonuses from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for its administration of the Food Stamp Program. The three bonuses, totaling \$767,832.26, were for being among the top three most improved states in error rates, for being among the top four states with the lowest negative error rates, and for timeliness of processing food stamp applications within federal timeframes.

"The Food Stamp Program is a critical way of providing healthy meals to a number of the citizens of the State, particularly our working poor," said Stephen. "However, we must strive to ensure that these services are delivered in a fair and accurate manner. These bonuses show the tremendous commitment to quality of our Division of Family Assistance. While we have seen excellent progress, we are committed

to further improvement. We are honored to receive these awards."

The payment error rate indicates the percentage of accuracy in determining the correct amount of benefit for recipients. The negative error rate measures the frequency of improper denials or termination of benefits.

"These high performance bonus awards are a wonderful tribute to the hard work and high caliber of our dedicated staff who are committed to helping individuals and families in New Hampshire," said Mary Anne Broshek, Director of DFA.

Last year, DFA received a high performance bonus in recognition of its success in helping former welfare recipients retain jobs and increase their earnings in federal fiscal year 2001. In addition, DFA received a bonus award for its achievement in assisting families in the area of access to child care and participation in the Food Stamp Program during federal fiscal year 2002.

Medicaid Modernization

Months of work have culminated in the draft Medicaid Modernization Plan to be released shortly for public review and comment. You may recall that this effort began in earnest six months ago when two events came together. One was the loss of \$100M in federal Medicaid funding beginning next fiscal year, and the resulting need to begin planning for alternatives prior to the beginning of next budget cycle. The other event was a meeting between Governor Benson and federal Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Tommy Thompson. At that meeting, Secretary Thompson offered New Hampshire a rare opportunity – his support for a redesigned New Hampshire Medicaid Program, one developed by us as if we were creating a new program from a blank sheet of paper.

Medicaid is extremely complex and redesigning a new program is equally complex. Commissioner Stephen approached the task in several ways. A Department steering committee was created and a project manager named. An Advisory Council representing diverse groups of external interests was formed to meet monthly with the Commissioner to provide ideas and feedback. Stakeholder groups were identified and offered participation. Internal work groups were established to research, create, and analyze new ideas. A contractor was brought on board to assist with the planning process. Most importantly, Commissioner Stephen insisted this be an open process and actively solicited ideas and comments from providers, consumers, and the general public. The Commissioner, with the steering committee, conducted evening forums in each county of the State, listening to suggestions from the public. Over 1,000 citizens attended these forums, with some 400 offering comment. In addition, a dedicated e-mail account was created, *Medicaid Feedback*, where another 160 comments were received from the public.

From all these sources, the Department has developed a draft Medicaid Modernization plan, one that the Department believes creates a Medicaid program that is unique to New Hampshire and best meets our own needs.

*Medicaid
Continued on page 7*

Joseph "Joe" Lorden

On September 14th, Joe Lorden passed away after a sudden illness. Joe, who worked for the Department for more than 20 years, was a Juvenile Probation and Parole Office (JPPO) who worked out of the Berlin District Office.

"Joe was more than a colleague to those who worked with him throughout his career," said Richard Sarett, Joe's JPPO Supervisor. "He was always there to talk with and to listen; he was always in a good mood and willing to share a story.

"Joe cared deeply about all the young people he worked with throughout the years."

According to Richard, a telling testimonial came from two youth at the Youth Development Center who called to offer their condolences. They cared deeply for Joe and knew he was always there for them and cared for them."

Joe, who was an outdoor enthusiast, is survived by his wife, Beth. Joe will be truly missed by his colleagues and friends at DHHS.

Tour of Hope

On October 9th, Norm Gill, Business Systems Analyst with the Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services, will join cyclists who are making a 3,500 mile cross-country Tour of Hope to benefit cancer research. Starting in California on October 1st, the Tour ends in Washington, DC, where Norm will participate, along with 1,500 others, in the last 30 miles of the ride.

World champion cyclist Lance Armstrong will join cyclists at the beginning, end, and points throughout the Tour.

To participate in the Tour of Hope Washington, DC, ride, Norm committed to raising a minimum of \$500 for cancer research. "I am dedicated to this cause because, in one way or another, we have all been touched in our lives by the effects of cancer and its devastation to our families and friends," said Norm.

Great job, Norm!



Milestones

Welcome to the following individuals who joined DHHS in July and August:

Elizabeth Campbell

Licensed Practical Nurse

Linda Campbell

Registered Nurse II

Jorge Cruz

Mental Health Worker Trainee

Kristi Gillette

Family Services Specialist Trainee

Patricia Grima

Nursing Assistant II

Jon Happnie

Health Facilities Cleaner II

Karen Hemmerlein

Registered Nurse II

Kelly Marsh

Nursing Assistant II

Dianne Phillon

Psychiatric Social Worker

Carol Pied

Medical Service Consultant II

Todd Riel

Mental Health Worker Trainee

Amanda Scott

Child Protective Service Worker Trainee

Brian Soucy

Youth Counselor I

Amir Veletanlic

Mental Health Worker Trainee

Diane Vignola

Health Facilities Cleaner II

Farewell and our deepest appreciation for a job well done to the following staff who retired in July and August:

Janet Beauchesne

Neal Boutin

Marilyn Cloud

Esther Crowley

Carolyn Damour

Lance De Plante

Sandra Demers

Sharon Face

John Fransway

Mary Freeman

Judith Godbout

Louise Hackett

June Hart

John Herbert

Theresa Lavoie

Glenna Law

Sheila Lazzaro

Elizabeth Lincoln

Patricia Martin

Dorothy Melzard

Donna Palmer

Douglas Ponusky

Riley Regan

Ann Ring

Sandra Rogers

Diane Steward

Michael Swift

Nancy Torrey

Patricia Van Den Berghe

Beverly Weddleton

Linda Weinberg

John White

Susan Williams

Jonathan Zedalis

Employee Profiles

When Betty Hancock started working for the State of New Hampshire in the Governor's office, under then-Governor Meldrim Thomson, there were no computers. Things have changed a lot in her 31 years of service.

Betty worked under three governors before coming to DHHS ten years later. She has since worked for nine commissioners beginning with Ned Helms.

"I have been so fortunate to work with such wonderful people and such great friends," said Betty. She now works in the front lobby of the Brown Building with Clare Danis.

Betty grew up in Concord and still lives here with her husband, Stewart. She has a son, John, and a grandson, Johnny, who is 14.

One thing that hasn't changed in all of her years here is her telephone extension. It has moved with her through every position, so people always know how to reach her if they ever need a helping hand, and she will always be glad to give one, with a smile.



Betty Hancock

"I am a people person," she said. "I care about people and have always tried to be as helpful as possible to everyone who works here or comes through our doors."



Clare Danis

Clare Danis came to DHHS from a legal background. "I was a legal secretary before I worked in the Administrative Office of the Courts as a transcriptionist," said Clare.

She has now been with the Department for three years manning the front desk in the

Brown building. Clare grew up in New York state but came to Concord in the 1950s. She has kept very busy over the years working, going to school, and raising seven children.

"Four of them live in New Hampshire now, whereas before they were scattered all over," said Clare. She also has 11 grandchildren.

Clare studied to become a legal secretary and then a paralegal after her children were grown. She has also attended art classes for many years. Her favorite type is portraits, which she does in pastels.

"I have always liked people so that's why I like portraits best," said Clare. She takes at least one week-long art class every year. She just recently returned from Michigan with

four new portraits.

Clare likes working in the front lobby because she, like Betty, gets to help people. "I like the interaction with people and I know almost everyone in the building by name."

Statewide DHHS Managers Meeting

On October 1st, Commissioner Stephen reinstituted the Statewide Managers Meeting for all of DHHS. The meeting was held at the Howard Recreation Building at State Office Park South.

Commissioner Stephen started the meeting discussing Medicaid Modernization. The plan is just about complete, and he highlighted some of the areas the Department was looking at for revision and the reasons for these potential changes.

The Commissioner also talked about the budget. The proposed budget for FY '06-'07 has been finalized and has gone over to the Governor's office. The Governor's budget, with requested cuts to budgets '04-'05 and '05-'06, is still being worked on.

Information on the finalization of the Departmental reorganization was given as well.

An e-mail will be sent to all employees in the next few weeks detailing the final proposed structure. The full plan is due to go to the Division of Personnel shortly for approval.

The Commissioner again thanked all employees of the Department for all their hard work, especially during these difficult budgetary times. He emphasized that even with the budget cuts, no one from DHHS has been laid off, except for some in unclassified positions, and he is doing all he can to maintain this commitment.

Mark Jewell, from Human Resources, discussed the plan for offering training programs to DHHS employees. The trainings will now be coordinated through HR to better identify who should get what training and keep track of those who have.

Nick Toumpas discussed some new initia-

tives, including a project to track progress and performance of different programs. The new tool, called a "Balanced Score Card," is still being worked on, but more information will be coming soon.

As a closing message, or some would say parting shot, Associate Commissioner John Wallace gave a talk and slide show on "policy changes." John has been involved with numerous Holiday Plays at DHHS over the years, to give some idea of the content. All present enjoyed a good laugh.



Medicaid Translation Service

The Medicaid Client Services Unit will now offer translation services for speakers of Spanish, Arabic, and Bosnian through DHHS' Client Services phone line. Callers will be allowed to leave a voice mail message in their native language. The message will then be received by a translator who will return the phone call and assist in a three-way dialogue to DHHS' Client Service Staff.

"Language difficulties can cause people not

to seek out appropriate care," said Commissioner Stephen. "We want to make sure that these folks get the right treatment and they need translation services to achieve this."

Spanish, Arabic, and Bosnian are the top three languages spoken by non-native Medicaid consumers. A number of those who speak these languages are recent refugees from various countries who have immigrated to the State.

Medicaid

Continued from page 4

You are welcome to review the draft plan, which will be posted on the Department's web site, and offer your comments and suggestions.

*Lloyd Peterson, Project Director
Medicaid Modernization*

Reorganization

The reorganization process is winding down. Some key steps will be taking place this month, mainly all the organizations within the Department are to have their packages completed and submitted to the Reorganization Team. This information will be approved by the Team and the Commissioner and then submitted for final approval.

The packages contain descriptions of the mission, functions, and goals of each organization, its current and proposed organizational structure, and a detailed listing of all positions within the organization. This will go first to the Division of Personnel for ap-

proval. The approval process may take some time. Parts of the plan will also be reviewed by the Federal Government.

In addition, someone should be hired shortly for the Substance Abuse Director position as well as a head of the Homeless, Housing, and Transportation Program. Richard Kellogg has officially joined the Department as of September 7th as the Director of the Division of Community Based Services. "We will continue to function under the new structure while the approval process is ongoing," said Commissioner Stephen, "and we will make any minor changes and adjustments required as they become necessary. I want to

thank everyone at the Department for their patience and participation in these reorganization efforts. And I would like to give special thanks to Nick Toumpas for overseeing our reorganization effort. The dedication and hard work during these budget cuts and hiring freezes is commendable."



Laboratory Construction on Hazen Drive Nearly Complete

Following years of planning and coordination, the State's Public Health Laboratories (PHL) is undergoing major expansion and renovation. Built in 1973, the existing laboratory wing was no longer able to serve the State adequately.

Changes in technology have resulted in the use of more sophisticated instruments that require more utilities and space. The old heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system also needed to be replaced with a "one pass" ventilation system so that no hazardous materials exhausted can make their way back into the building.

The PHL is now responsible for identifying and monitoring newly emerging and re-emerging diseases and substances of public concern, including HIV, West Nile Virus, chlamydia, agents of terror, lead, and mercury. More space was necessary to complete the testing associated with this added responsibility.

The PHL is also required to handle extremely dangerous microorganisms that could not be handled safely in the old facility, such as SARS, avian influenza, and Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus. Additionally, compliance with the US Patriot Act requires enhanced security that was not possible in the old building.

The new lab now houses state-of-the-art equipment that rapidly finds and identifies microorganism by detecting the presence of

their DNA and RNA. Lab work that used to take from 48 hours to a week can now be finished within one working day.

According to Dr. Jesse Greenblatt, State Epidemiologist, "Most of the credit for the new lab goes to Veronica Malmberg. It is through her dedication and perseverance that this project got off the ground. She and her staff have always done a tremendous job of protecting the public's health. Now their work can be done more rapidly in response to the growing concerns we face and we can better assist the State's hospitals with the identification of agents not within the scope of their labs."

New construction is now complete, but renovations to the existing wing is a work in progress. When the first half of the renovations are finished, staff will shift all operations to that half so that the rest of the old wing can be renovated.



Dan Hubbard, Program Manager, Virology and Special Testing, stands outside the new PHL.

Flu

Continued from page 1

encourages all health care providers to follow these recommendations and give the vaccine only to people in these categories who are at risk for complications. Residents of the State are being asked not to request a flu shot if they do not fall into one of these groups. The priority groups for this year are:

- ❖ All children age 6-23 months
- ❖ Adults age 65 years or older
- ❖ People age 2-64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions
- ❖ Pregnant women
- ❖ Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities
- ❖ Children 6-18 months of age on chronic aspirin therapy
- ❖ Health care workers with direct patient contact
- ❖ Out-of-home caregivers and household contact of children aged <6 months.

The flu can be one of the most serious illnesses of the winter season. In the U.S., more than 200,000 people each year are hospitalized due to flu complications and an estimated 36,000 die.

There are also other ways for people to protect themselves from flu including washing hands frequently, getting plenty of rest, eating right, staying home from work or school if you are ill, not sharing utensils, and covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze and then washing your hands.

Don't forget..... Project Caring



Project Caring, DHHS' food drive to benefit food pantries throughout the State, will run from October 19th-November 19th. Look for the donation box in your facility.

Items needed include canned goods (e.g., fruits, beans, tuna, vegetables, soup, baby formula, etc.), staple items (e.g., rice, cereal, pasta, etc.), and personal hygiene products (e.g., toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, disposable diapers, etc.).

If you have any questions about the project, e-mail or call Kathy Mineart, project coordinator, at 271-2175.

*Commissioner
Continued from page 1*

thinking about the second. Too many people need us to be very good at what we do to focus on what we have done. And I can say that there is no way this could be done without the committed, dedicated staff we have. Thank you for a wonderful year.

Groundbreaking at YDC

In July, Governor Craig Benson and Commissioner John Stephen were joined by local and state officials at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new building being constructed on the Youth Development Center (YDC) campus in Manchester.

The new building, which will house resident living quarters and classrooms, will be completed in 2006.

